

New Highway, Chattergala tunnel game-changer for Bani sector: Dr Jitendra

STATE TIMES NEWS

BANI: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh said here on Wednesday that the new National Highway from Lakhanpur via Bani-Basohli to Doda with Chattergala Tunnel enroute will be a game-changer for the entire Bani sector.

Addressing a mammoth public rally here today, Dr. Jitendra Singh said, the commitment and consistency with which the government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi works can be appreciated from the fact that within two weeks of the swearing-in of the Modi government for the third term, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways gave approval for construction of the vital Chattergala Tunnel, which will cost around Rs.4000 Crore and will provide all-weather alternate connectivity. This, he said, will not only bring in ease of travel but also promote business, generate revenue and create employment opportunities.

Dr. Jitendra said, the entire Bani region has a huge tourism potential but this can be developed only if there is ease of connectivity. Therefore, the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has planned to begin the construction of the highway from one end and when



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh addressing BJP election public rally at Bani on Wednesday.

it reaches the tunnel site, the construction of the Chattergala Tunnel will also be executed, he added.

Dr. Jitendra added that the proposal for Chattergala Tunnel had been initiated about six years back and the DPR was also prepared by the BRO agency BEACON but due to lack of funds it could not be undertaken. Finally, the decision was taken soon after the swearing-in of Modi Government 3.0, he informed.

Calling upon the audience to recall the scenario before 2014, Dr. Singh recalled it was a herculean task to reach Bani from Jammu and the journey would take the whole day and was also very exhausting and tiresome. Today on the other hand, he said, we find several daily com-

muters coming from Jammu, finishing their business and returning back in the evening. This change, he said, has been possible because there is a network of roads and even the remotest villages have been connected in the last 10 years of the Modi government.

Dr. Singh promised that the remaining roads will also be undertaken one-by-one. In addition, he said, the other demands pertaining to the education sector like upgradation of the schools and Degree colleges will also be addressed in due course of time.

Dr. Jitendra said that the earlier governments had deliberately neglected remote areas of the Jammu region because of vote bank considerations. He said, the elected repre-

sentatives of these parties never wanted education or awareness to reach the people in remote areas so that, election after election, the people's ignorance could be exploited to secure their vote.

In a sharp attack on the opposition, Dr. Jitendra said, there have been attempts by Congress and some other opposition Party candidates to raise the issue of reservation. He reminded the audience that the reservation for the Scheduled Tribes including Gujjars and Pahadis was done by the Modi government and asked if Congress was so much concerned about them why could they not do it in the early 50 to 60 years when they were at the helm of powers.

Appealing to the innocent people of this far-flung area not to be carried away by the opposition propaganda, Dr. Singh said, any further concern about the reservation will also be addressed only and only by the Modi Government because it is a matter pertaining to the Central Government and not to the Government of Jammu & Kashmir. It is only the Modi government, which has been sensitive to the issue of reservation in different forms and its past record proves that it will continue to be so in future as well.



Sachin Pilot urges citizens to vote enthusiastically for Congress candidate Raman Bhalla

Bhalla reiterates his pledge to work tirelessly for welfare of people

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a spirited rally held in support of Congress candidate Raman Bhalla for the Jammu South constituency, All India Congress Committee (AICC) General Secretary Sachin Pilot on Wednesday addressed the gathering at Bhour Camp here, urging citizens to vote enthusiastically for the Congress party.

Pilot emphasized the importance of democratic participation and highlighted the achievements of the Congress in improving the lives of the people.

He praised Bhalla's dedication to public service and his commitment to addressing key issues such as development, education, and health-care.

During his address, Sachin Pilot called upon the community to unite and make their voices heard by voting for a candidate who genuinely represents their interests. He underscored that every vote counts in shaping a better future for Jammu.

The rally witnessed an outpouring of support, with party workers and local residents rallying behind Bhalla, showcasing banners and chanting slogans. Pilot's passionate appeal aimed to energize the electorate and inspire them to engage actively in the upcoming elections. The event was characterized by a palpable sense of enthusiasm as attendees expressed their



All India Congress Committee General Secretary Sachin Pilot addressing rally in favour of party candidate from Jammu South Raman Bhalla at Bhour Camp, Jammu.

backing for Bhalla, highlighting his commitment to community development and social justice.

Addressing the crowd, prominent party leaders urged citizens to exercise their democratic rights and vote in large numbers for the Congress party.

They outlined the achievements of the Congress government and underscored Bhalla's track record as a dedicated public servant, focusing on key issues such as infrastructure development, education, and healthcare.

Raman Bhalla took the stage, resonating with the audience by sharing his vision for a more prosperous Jammu. He reiterated his

pledge to work tirelessly for the welfare of the people, promising to address their concerns and improve their quality of life.

Bhalla's speech focused on unity and progress, appealing to voters to look beyond party affiliations and prioritize the candidate who truly represents their interests.

Party officials encouraged everyone to participate in the electoral process, emphasizing that every vote matters in shaping the future of Jammu.

The enthusiasm displayed at the rally signals a strong campaign effort by the Congress party as they seek to secure a decisive victory in the upcoming elections.

Advisor Ladakh chairs 10th UT- Level Banker's Committee Meeting

STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: The Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, UT Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal presided over the 10th meeting of the Union Territory Level Bankers Committee (UTLBC) of Ladakh for the quarter ended June 30, 2024, at Leh.

The Assistant General Manager, State Bank of India, Convenor UTLBC of UT Ladakh, Tsering Morup gave a detailed presentation about the achievements of banks under various schemes up to quarter ended June 2024. The banks achieved 57% by disbursing total credit of Rs.529.08 Crore under Priority Sector advances against the Annual Credit Target of Rs.925.06 Crore. The overall achievement under Priority and Non-Priority sector advances by all banks in UT Ladakh is 55% by disbursing credit of Rs.1032.79 Crore against the ACP of Rs.1887.66 Crore by the end of 1st quarter i.e. June 2024.



Advisor to LG UT Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal chairing 10th meeting of UT Level Bankers Committee of Ladakh.

informed that the total deposits as on June 30, 2024 stood at Rs.9170.61 Crore as compared to Rs.8411.47 Crore as on June 30, 2023 with the deposits growth of 9% on a year-on-year basis. The total credit as on June 30, 2024 stood at Rs.4403.37 Crore as compared to Rs.3900.55 Crore as on June 30, 2023 with the credit growth of 12.89% on year-on-year basis in UT Ladakh. The overall CD Ratio of UT Ladakh is 48.02% for the quarter ended June 30, 2024.

Pawan Kotwal directed the concerned department to start the drive of Solar roof-top scheme in Ladakh so that people of Ladakh can avail the benefit, while also leading Ladakh towards becoming a Green UT. In this regard, Dr. Kotwal instructed all the banks to come forward in sanctioning the loan under the Solar Roof top Scheme.

Further, Dr. Kotwal directed to amplify coverage under PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and stressed on the need to review the scheme on regular intervals. Additionally, he also spoke

of the need to further publicize GoI schemes such as PM Vishwakarma scheme so that the end result of facilitating traditional crafts persons can be fully realised.

Vijendra Pal Singh, Deputy General Manager, Central Registry of Asset Reconstruction and Security Interest of India. (DGM CERSAI) gave a detailed presentation on the implementation of Central Know Your Customer (CKYC) in Banks. Advisor Dr. Kotwal appreciated the efforts made by CERSAI and directed all the banks to implement the

same efficiently. He also stressed on avoiding duplicity of account holders so that true figures of account holders can be identified.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Sanjeev Khirwar; Commissioner Secretary, Padma Angmo; Commissioner Secretary, V a s a n t h a k u m a r N a m a s i v a y a m ; Administrative Secretary, Vikram Singh Malik, Deputy Commissioner Leh Santosh Sukhadeve; Vimal Kishore, General Manager, State Bank of India, (Local Head Office) LHO Chandigarh, Neeraj Kumar, General Manager, Reserve Bank of India, Jammu, Vikas Mittal, (General Manager) GM, NABARD Jammu, Ravindra Kumar Gupta Deputy General Manager (DGM) State Bank of India Jammu, Directors of concerned departments, UT Administration, and senior representatives of the member banks and financial institutions.

NC to face crushing defeat, may not be able to open account in Jammu: Sham

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a ruthless attack on the National Conference (NC), Senior BJP leader and party candidate for Jammu North segment, Sham Lal Sharma on Wednesday said that this Kashmir based party has lost its credibility and ground even in the valley and will shrink to 12 to 15 seats only from Kashmir. It may not be able to open its account in the Jammu region.

Addressing a series of election meetings in Jammu north constituency, Sham said that NC's Vice President and former Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, who is fighting on two seats from Kashmir, himself is not confident to win even on one seat hence he has chosen to fight from two safe seats. In the current elections, the NC will face crushing defeat due to its poor performance and anti-people policies in Jammu Kashmir for decades together.

Coming heavily on NC President and former Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Vice President,



BJP candidate for Jammu North segment, Sham Lal Sharma addressing public meeting.

Omar Abdullah, Sham said that the duo got opportunities to serve the people for a maximum period, but they did not deliver on ground and cheated the people in the name of development and welfare. They only worked for their personal gains, party cadre, promoted communalism, regionalism, separatism and nepotism and misled the common people and blackmailed the Central government to seek free flow of funds. Now, they both are badly freighted from the results of elections and indulging in unnecessary propaganda on other political outfits in Jammu Kashmir, Sham asserted.

Sham further noted that people of Jammu Kashmir,

particularly Valley have fed up from their hollow slogans, false promises and poor performance and will reject them totally and elect a new government headed by BJP which can only ensure good governance, peace, security and equitable development in Jammu Kashmir. People are badly inspired by the programmes and policies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and will give a clear cut mandate to BJP to form its exclusive government here.

Elaborating BJP's agenda for the welfare of Jammu Kashmir, Sham said that the Central Government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken several initiatives for restoring lasting peace and overall develop-

ment for the past over one decade. After the abrogation of Article 370, there is substantial change in the situation on ground, law in order is almost normal and all developmental activities are going apace in all the districts normally, he added.

Prominent among those who accompanied and addressed the gathering included, Mandal Adhyaksh Rakesh Singh, Convenor Swatch Bharat Abhiyan Er. Dil Bahadur Singh, K D Singh, Ex Sarpanch's Raj Dev Singh, Kuljeet Singh, Ritu Devi, Hari Saran, BJP Leader Zorawar Singh.

Make frequent inspections to ensure protection of consumer interests: CS

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Wednesday chaired the first meeting of the UT level Committee for Standardization & Quality Control of the local chapter of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) tasked to maintain the highest standards for goods and services that are critical for establishing a robust "Quality Ecosystem" throughout the country.

The Dy Director General, BIS (North); Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce; Commissioner Secretary, FCS&CA; Deputy Commissioner, Food Safety Organization; GM, NIIPC; Representatives from R&B, SIDCO, SICOP, Kashmir/Jammu Chamber of Commerce & Industries, Consumer Protection (an NGO) and other concerned officers attended the meeting.

While speaking in this meeting, the Chief Secretary



Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo chairing a meeting.

impressed upon the concerned organisation to make frequent inspections of all business establishments dealing with such products and services coming under the ambit of the law of Standardization.

He stressed upon the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department (FCS&CA) to work for establishment of district level cells as is the nationwide practice to protect the consumer rights.

Dulloo also urged them to generate awareness among the masses about the same so that they too are familiar

with the national standards recommended by this organisation regarding the goods and services availed by the people.

Dulloo further emphasized upon the importance of ensuring adherence to national standards to boost economic growth, improve public services, and protect consumers here across J&K.

During the meeting, discussions focused on strengthening the implementation of standards across various sectors in Jammu and Kashmir to promote safety, quality, and consumer protection. The committee

reviewed ongoing initiatives and identified new opportunities for the integration of Indian Standards in government policies, infrastructure, and industries within the Union Territory.

Deputy Director General (North), BIS, Shesh Lata presented an overview of BIS activities and key agenda points. She provided key insights into BIS's role in supporting the state's efforts and reiterated BIS's commitment to facilitating capacity-building initiatives, especially in sectors critical to the UT's consumer rights protection.

The State Level Committee for Standardization plays a pivotal role in promoting and implementing standardization across the UT by coordinating with various stakeholders, ensuring the holistic growth of industries and sectors besides ensuring quality control of critical goods & services across the country.

Home Voting begins across 3 ACs of Poonch

STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: Home voting for the Assembly elections commenced on Wednesday in all three Assembly Constituencies (ACs) of Poonch district amid stringent security measures. Polling parties, accompanied by substantial security personnel, began visiting the homes of elderly and disabled voters, marking a significant step towards inclusive electoral participation. The process, continuing until September 20, 2024, involves 426 staff members, including polling personnel, micro-observers, and reserves. They cover 176 clusters across Surankote, Haveli, and Mendhar constituencies. The district identified 2,106 eligible home voters: 625 in Surankote, 717 in Haveli, and 764 in Mendhar, comprising indi-

viduals aged 85 and above and persons with disabilities. Security forces ensure safety for polling staff and voters. Each polling team is accompanied by armed personnel, with additional patrols in sensitive areas. District Election Officer (DEO) Vikas Kundal emphasized the district's commitment to inclusivity and security: "We aim for 100% voter participation from home voters, ensuring every eligible individual can vote safely and securely." Shivram, 98, from Mangnar village, shared: "I had almost lost hope of voting. But seeing polling staff at my home, I felt on top of the world!" He applauded the Election Commission of India's efforts. Sakina Bi, a disabled resident of Kanuyian village, expressed satisfaction after casting her vote.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Eight new life members were inducted into Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) by its Jammu Chapter in a function held here on Wednesday.

Three new members viz. Anil Goswami (IAS Retd.), Hemant Sharma (IAS Retd.) and Ar. Himani Badyal were formally welcomed and recognized as life members. Formal membership letters and pins were presented to the Inductees. A book titled 'Jammu Cantonment, published by INTACH which covers Dogra



INTACH Jammu Chapter members posing for a photograph.

military heritage buildings in Jammu and its glorious traditions was also released on this occasion by Anil Goswami, Maj General Goverdhan, Hemant Sharma and Dr. Jyotsana Singh, Honorary

Director Amar Mahal Museum and Library. Anil Goswami expressed his happiness at joining the INTACH fraternity and assured that all efforts shall be made to add further towards already initiated endeavours.

Maj General Goverdhan Singh Jamwal urged upon all the members to think consciously about the decay of our valuable heritage and equip the next generation with knowledge to carry out the work for its preservation and protection.

Dr. Jyotsna Singh talked about new initiatives for providing platforms for vibrant discussions and deliberations on various aspects of culture of Jammu. Earlier, the function started with the welcome address by S.M Sahni Convenor INTACH Jammu Chapter. He outlined the ongoing con-

servation and preservation projects and plans of the Chapter. Arvind Kotwal Coordinator Heritage Tourism presented the vote of thanks. Other life members who were present on this occasion included C.M Seth (IFS Retd.), Co-convenor INTACH J&K Chapter, Resham Kashyap (JKAS Retd.), Narinder Khajuria JKAS, Sh. K.K. Sharma, Prof. Sudhir Singh, Ajay Gandotra Sr. Advocate, Dr. Rajesh Sharma and Dr. Vivek Kumar Sharma. Dharna Mayavart, Heritage Archivist was the special invitee on the occasion.